



News Release

**U.S. General Services Administration
Northeast & Caribbean Region**

**For Release February 10, 2003
GSA-R2-0302**

**Contact: Renee Miscione (212) 264-0424
renee.miscione@gsa.gov**

Islip Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse Reaps Honors

New York City – The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) is pleased to announce that the United States Courthouse and Federal Building in Central Islip, New York, earned the American Institute of Architects (AIA) highest award for architecture for 2003. The Central Islip building was selected from nearly 600 nominations. The AIA Award for Architecture recognizes excellence in architecture, interiors, and urban design.

“We are very proud that one of our premier facilities has received this honor,” said GSA Regional Administrator Karl Reichelt. “This U.S. Courthouse and Federal Building will not only be recognized as a landmark in its community, but will serve the needs of the federal government and the U.S. Courts on eastern Long Island for decades to come.” Reichelt noted that the Central Islip complex is a significant asset to the taxpaying public. “Constructing the federal courthouse solved major space and operational problems for the courts while also allowing us to plan for future expansion,” Reichelt said. “The building is near fully occupied, and more than pays for itself in rent from our highly satisfied customers. It is truly a public asset beyond an architectural achievement.”

Designed by world-renowned architect Richard Meier, the United States Courthouse and Federal Building in Central Islip is one of the first federal facilities to be completed under GSA’s Design Excellence Program that was established in the mid-90’s to raise the profile of Federal architecture. This structure sets a new standard of excellence in Federal architecture and reinterprets the traditional American courthouse design for the 21st century. The familiar classical courthouse with heavy stone walls and grand columns is transformed into a civic edifice that is light and transparent - a structure that exemplifies the openness and accessibility to justice in a diverse democratic society.

In their comments on the award, the AIA noted, “The classic Modernist articulation of this building creates a proud and regal form without relying on old emblems of the archetypal courthouse,” said the

(more)

GSA 0302 (Islip), p. 2 of 2

jury of this new federal building. "The arrangement also allows for the social ideology and the public nature of our system of law to be expressed in built form."

Opened in 2000, the elegant, 11-story white building offers panoramic views of both the Great South Bay and the Atlantic Ocean. The structure dominates the skyline, giving the building a monumental presence. Visitors ascend wide tiers of steps to a broad plaza that is more than 600 feet long and 150 feet wide. The focus of the plaza is the building entrance-a four-story portal cut into a soaring 190-foot high rotunda. The rotunda, which is in the form of a cone, is clad in white metal panels. Beyond the rotunda, visitors enter a full height skylit atrium that divides the District and Magistrate courtrooms on the west side from the Bankruptcy courtrooms on the east. The atrium is a soaring public space where public events can be held with an open staircase that leads to a large balcony providing access to the Special Proceedings Courtroom.

The new Long Island Federal Courthouse, situated on 28.8 acres in Central Islip, New York, serves as the home for the Long Island judges of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York, consolidating the Court's Long Island operations for the first time under a single facility. The building presently houses 23 courtrooms and 25 judges' chambers, with the capability to expand as the needs of the district demand. The building accommodates support facilities for the United States Marshal's Service and the United States Probation Department and Pretrial Services, as well as offices for the United States Attorney's Office, the Federal Defenders' Office, the United States Trustee's Office, and various other governmental agencies. The building features a law library and the site has a separate day-care facility for the children of employees.

In addition to the AIA honor, the Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse in Central Islip has also been recognized by GSA's own Design Awards Program. Held every two years, the GSA's Design Awards recognize the best in GSA design and construction projects. The entries are juried and selected by professional private sector peers and are judged in terms of success in meeting project objectives, consistence with GSA's environmental goals and policies, aesthetic sensibility, originality, innovation, technical and functional proficiency and cost efficiency, among others.

GSA is a centralized federal procurement and property management agency created by Congress to improve government efficiency and help federal agencies better serve the public. It acquires, on behalf of federal agencies, office space, equipment, telecommunications, information technology, supplies and services. GSA, comprised of 14,000 associates, provides services and solutions for the office operations of over 1 million federal workers located in 8,300 government - owned and leased buildings in 1,600 U.S. communities.

